



Arizona Department of Public Safety

- For Immediate Release -

Tuesday, February 3, 2009

Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) arrests violent felon two weeks after he had rammed and fled from Highway Patrol officers.

DPS was assisted by the U.S. Marshals Office in this arrest

On Jan. 29, 2009, detectives from the Violent Criminal Apprehension Team (VCAT), which is led and administered by the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS) with the assistance of the U.S. Marshals Office, arrested Anthony Soto, 22, in the area of 56th Drive and Lewis in Phoenix. Soto was wanted on a felony warrant out of Maricopa County Superior Court for probation absconder on possession of drugs in Phoenix. Soto was also charged by DPS for aggravated assault on a police officer, two counts of endangerment, misconduct involving weapons, in possession by a prohibited possessor and misconduct involving weapons, in possession of marijuana, misconduct involving explosives, unlawful means of transportation charges and possession of marijuana for sale.

The charges stemmed from an incident on Jan. 11, 2009, when a DPS Highway Patrol officer located a stolen SUV (a 2008 Mercury Mountaineer) in the parking lot of the Premier Inn near Interstate 17 and Peoria. Additional Highway Patrol officers responded. Several suspects emerged from the hotel room and attempted to get in the SUV. The officers attempted to conduct a high-risk stop, to take the suspects into custody. One suspect, later identified as Anthony Soto, got in the SUV, accelerated in reverse striking a truck and trailer, then accelerated forward, struck a DPS patrol car and fled the area at a high speed. Officers located the stolen SUV, which had been abandoned about two miles away. In processing the initial crime scene at the hotel, DPS officers located a .45-caliber handgun that had been thrown in a trashcan. The Vehicle Theft Task Force (VTTF), which is also led and administered by DPS, assisted in this case to include processing the stolen SUV. A "half Mexican stick" (equivalent to dynamite) was found in the stolen SUV, which was removed and disposed of by the DPS Bomb Squad.

Through investigative efforts, DPS detectives and U.S. Marshals were able to identify, locate and arrest Antony Soto on Jan 29. At the time of arrest Soto was found with a loaded .9mm handgun concealed in a shoulder holster with two additional loaded magazines, a small amount of marijuana and a vehicle reported stolen out of California. Soto is a known street gang member and associate of a prison gang. Soto was booked into the Maricopa County Jail.

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